

With this budget, Democrats are not only making healthcare more affordable for all Americans; we are building a healthier and safer Nation.

HELPING WORKING FAMILIES WITH THE COST OF LIVING

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I rise to highlight the significant investments we enacted to help working families with the cost of living.

In a time of great uncertainty and change, people are living paycheck to paycheck or on fixed incomes. Many are struggling just to pay basic bills.

Our investments represent a lifeline for working families. By increasing funding for childcare, public schools, and providing high-quality job training, this bill gives more tools to help Americans succeed.

Government must serve the people, not the biggest corporations. We provided resources to small businesses and entrepreneurs as they pursue the American Dream. We invested to connect communities to the internet and expand access to affordable housing and homeownership. We strengthened our core services and tackled the root causes of rising prices.

One example is by providing \$158 million to support the production and delivery of small- to medium-size manufacturers, helping detangle the supply chain and lower costs to consumers. We paid for it by cracking down on big corporations and the wealthiest who are not paying their fair share. This government funding legislation truly delivers for the people.

OUR SENIORS NEED HELP NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, Martin Luther King famously said in a speech in Memphis that there is always a need to act, but especially, as he noted there at the time, with the fierce urgency of now.

The fierce urgency of now, as it relates to Social Security, has been underscored by a global pandemic, a global pandemic that has hit the world and our country especially hard.

More than 940,000 Americans have lost their lives. Of those who have perished, over 700,000 of them are over age 65. I bring this to the attention of the body because COVID has specifically underscored a problem that existed amongst our elderly before the outbreak of this international pandemic. Over 700,000 over the age of 65 have died. This is the same group that is worse hit by the effects of inflation.

As you know, Madam Speaker, everybody who is on a fixed income and has to marshal their resources understands how inflation can be crippling. All the more reason that we need to provide relief, and relief is on the way. Relief is on the way with the Social Security 2100: A Sacred Trust Act, currently in

the process of being marked up in the Ways and Means Committee.

Our seniors need our help now, as they struggle both with COVID and as they struggle being on a fixed income.

The last time that the United States Congress did anything to enhance Social Security was more than 51 years ago. Richard Nixon was the President of the United States, and the cost of a gallon of milk was 72 cents.

A lot has transpired since then, but what hasn't taken place is Congress and its responsibility to make sure that Social Security keeps pace with the changes that are needed. The last time Congress did anything substantial with Social Security was 39 years ago, in 1983. It increased the solvency, but it did so by cutting benefits and taxing the elderly.

Social Security 2100 seeks to enhance benefits, that hasn't been done in more than 50 years, and eliminate a burdensome tax on people who have to work after they have retired in order to make ends meet.

I want to especially commend the Congressional Black Caucus and Mr. CLYBURN for their efforts in this area, underscoring, again, and knowing what happens to people of color.

As Mr. CLYBURN so eloquently says: Not only is it people of color, but people in rural America. All across the South and all across this country, rural Americans are forced to live on fixed incomes that haven't been adjusted in more than 50 years. In the midst of COVID and this inflation, they are the ones who are hurt the most.

Congress can no longer afford to kick the can down the road and, once again, not address the preeminent program that prevents the elderly from living in poverty and the preeminent program that prevents children from living in poverty. It is time for Congress to act. It is our responsibility to do so.

As the chair of the Subcommittee on Social Security on the Ways and Means Committee, I am proud that Chairman NEAL and our membership are moving this legislation forward and onto the floor. It wouldn't happen without the best efforts put forward by Members of the Congressional Black Caucus, and I commend JOYCE BEATTY for her efforts as well.

□ 1030

FARM BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CARTER of Louisiana). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MANN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, in preparation for reauthorizing the farm bill in 2023, I rise today to deliver the fifth installment of my farm bill impact series where I am highlighting various aspects of the farm bill that deserve Congress' awareness and support.

If America is going to thrive, the people who feed, fuel, and clothe America must thrive.

The farm bill strengthens our country's national security because it strengthens our food security by supporting the tireless efforts of farmers, ranchers, and our agricultural producers.

Agriculture is a risky business, and Mother Nature can be a tough business partner. Almost no other American industry faces such volatility from forces like pests, disease, wind, drought, and fires like the ones in Reno County, Kansas, and Paradise, Kansas, over the last few months.

Natural disasters are make-or-break situations for the people who ensure that America remains the most food secure country in the world. That is why emergency programs within the farm bill are so critical.

The Livestock Indemnity Program and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish provide benefits to producers for livestock deaths caused by disease and adverse weather.

A veterinarian from Ashland, Kansas, told me that during the Starbuck fire back in 2017, to which he was an emergency responder, Clark County, Kansas, alone lost 6,000 to 9,000 head of cattle right at the beginning of calving season.

One producer suffered \$1.8 million in cattle losses during this disaster. The Livestock Indemnity Program helped producers who lost cattle in this disaster put their livelihoods back together.

However, LIP only covered cattle mortality at the time, not severely injured cattle. Rather than watch badly injured cattle get euthanized just to trigger LIP program payments, this veterinarian helped make changes to the program that are still in place today which provide better protection for producers and their livestock.

These programs, and many more, are investments in the future of our country, and they must remain strong in the 2023 farm bill if America is going to remain food secure and self-determining as a Nation.

Natural disasters, diseases, and weather emergencies, unfortunately, do happen, and America cannot afford to have these factors cripple the businesses of the men and women who keep us fed, fueled, and clothed.

That is why we need to think carefully and critically about the degrees to which we support emergency programs within the 2023 farm bill.

I will be back on the floor soon to deliver another installment of my farm bill impact series and highlight more programs and titles within the bill that Congress must understand and support to ensure that agriculture thrives in America.

FUNDING FOR ESSENTIAL PROJECTS IN ILLINOIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. UNDERWOOD) for 5 minutes.